(iii) greater role for Self Help Groups of the landless poor, especially those belonging to SC/ST, residing in project areas,

(iv) combination of Government Organisation (GO)/Non-Government Organisation (NGO) as Project Implementation Agencies,

(v) keep the project 'On Probation for one year,

(vi) 'Exit Protocol' for the PIAs to ensure sustainability of the project.

The present monitoring mechanism is being further strengthened with the introduction of Supplementary Observation Mechanism w.e.f. 1.4.2002 by associating reputed Instutitions, such as Agricultural Universitities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, 'Farmers' Training Centres, Non-Conventional Organisations, Research and Academic Institutions at State level and District level for monitoring of the projects right from the very beginning.These Institutions will provide timely and precise inputs regarding the pace and quality of the implementation of the projects on a permanent and dedicated basis.

Distribution of Waste and degraded forest land by States

1592. SHRI YADLAPATIVENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOP'MENT be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made to encourage State Governments to distribute waste and degraded forest land among the landless poor; and

(b) the measures taken to identify excess lands in villages and towns for distribution among the poor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) The subject of Land is under the exclusive legislative and administrative jurisdiction of the States as provided under Entry No. 18 of List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The Central Government is playing only an advisory and co-ordinating role in this field. Almost all the States/UTs have enacted land ceiling laws. The issue relating to distribution of ceiling surplus land, Bhoodan land and Government Wastelands have been discussed at various for including Revenue Secretaries'/Ministers' Conferences. It has been emphasized in such Conferences that the lands which are free from all encumbrances should be distributed expeditiously

amongst the landless rural poor. The Ministry have also prescribed submission of Quarterly Progress Reports by the State government regarding distribution of ceiling surplus land, Bhoodan Land and Government Wastelands.

Evaluation of DPAP

1593. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that drought prone area has increased from 55.3 million hectares in 1973 to 74.6 million hectares in 1995, although Rs.2195 crore have been spent on DPAP as reported by the CAG in his report on Drought Prone Areas;

(b) if so, whether Government have ever evaluated the efficacy of the programme; and

(c) if so, what remedial action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M. K. PATIL): (a) to (c) The Drought prone Programme (DPAP) was launched during 1973-74 to cover 54 districts together with part of another 18 districts contiguous with them for execution of drought proofing works. Subsequently the coverage of the Programme was extended to cover 55.3 million hectares of area identified as drought prone. Following a review of the Programme by a high level Technical Committee in 1994, the coverage of the Programme was further expanded to 74.6 million hectares from 1995-96. This increase in coverage is mainly on account of adoption of scientific criteria for identification of drought prone areas and the decision of the Government for continued treatment of areas already included under the programme though they had been recommended for deletion by the high level Technical Committee. Though the coverage of area under DPAP has increased overtime, the fact is that the coverage under the Programme is still below the potential problem area that needs treatment for drought proofing.

From 1995-96, the Programme is being implemented on watershed basis in accordance with the Guidelines for Watershed Development. The impact assessment studies commissioned by the Ministry indicate that